

SENATE—Thursday, February 10, 2000

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Dr. Roger V. Elliott, Edenton Street United Methodist Church, Raleigh, NC. He is sponsored by Senator JOHN EDWARDS.

We are pleased to have you with us.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain, Dr. Roger V. Elliott, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.
Almighty God, Creator and Sustainer of all life, we thank You for this great land in which we live; for its worthy aims, its charities, and its opportunities for all. Help this melting pot called America with all its varied colors, traditions, and hopes continue to be the best promised land this world can offer. Gracious God, as You anointed leaders and called prophets of old, lead us to recognize our true representatives and authentic leaders—men and women who love Your people and can walk with them, who sense their pain and share their joys, who dream their dreams and strive to accompany them to their common goal. Grant these elected leaders Your wisdom to seek first Your kingdom and Your righteousness, knowing that to do so will cause all others things to fall into place. Lead these Senators to seek Your counsel and to ask what You would have them do so that they may be saved from wrong choices and harmful actions. Guide them in Your straight path so that they may not stumble. Empower and embolden them to serve Your people well and to promote the principles of liberty and justice for all. Hear us, O Lord, as we make our prayer in Your holy name and presence. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JIM BUNNING, a Senator from the State of Kentucky, led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that prior to the proceedings beginning, the Senator from North Carolina be recognized to speak.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUNNING). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from North Carolina.
Mr. EDWARDS. I thank the Chair.

REVEREND ROGER V. ELLIOTT

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. President, I thank Dr. Ogilvie for helping work to get Dr. Elliott here this morning. Dr. Ogilvie has been a wonderful friend and counselor to me in the short time I have been here, and we are also very pleased to see he is doing well.

Dr. Elliott, the guest Chaplain today, is the minister of my home church, the church of which I am a member in Raleigh, NC. Edenton Street United Methodist Church is a church of which we are very proud—about 3,000 strong, I think, the last time I saw. He is here this morning with his lovely wife Jackie. We are very proud to have both of them with us.

The church itself, as I say, is a church of which we are extremely proud. It is a church that is involved in every aspect of ministering to the community in Raleigh and outside of Raleigh. Dr. Elliott has provided extraordinary leadership for this church. He has been a wonderful friend and counselor to myself and my family.

Dr. Elliott, I believe, received his doctorate degree from Duke University and did some postdoctoral study at Drew University. More important than that, though, is that he baptized both of my daughters, Emma Claire and Kate, of whom we are, of course, very proud. But most importantly, Dr. Elliott is a true messenger for God. He speaks the word of God rightly, and he inspires all of us; when he preaches on Sunday morning, we all come out knowing that God was present in our service. That is the most important thing I can say about Dr. Elliott. There is no finer Methodist anywhere, no finer minister anywhere, and I am very proud and honored to have him with us this morning to give the opening prayer.

**RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING
MAJORITY LEADER**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

SCHEDULE

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will begin debate on the nuclear waste disposal bill. Under the previous order, there will be 1 hour remaining for debate to be equally divided between the two bill managers. Following that debate, the Senate will immediately vote on final

passage of the bill. Therefore, Senators may expect the first vote at approximately 11 a.m. Following the vote, the Senate may begin consideration of any executive or legislative items cleared for action. Therefore, further votes may occur during today's session of the Senate.

I thank the Chair.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

**NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY
AMENDMENTS ACT OF 1999**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 1287 which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1287) to provide for the storage of spent nuclear fuel pending completion of a nuclear waste repository, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Lott (for Murkowski) amendment No. 2808, in the nature of a substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time until 11 a.m. shall be controlled by the Senator from Alaska, Mr. MURKOWSKI, and the Senator from New Mexico, Mr. BINGAMAN, or their designees.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, we are now in the final hour of discussion about this nuclear waste-related bill. I thought, since I do not see Senator MURKOWSKI, the chairman of our committee, I would go ahead and make my statement indicating my position. I did speak yesterday on the Senate floor on this issue and laid out the reasons I will be voting against S. 1287 this morning. I encourage my colleagues to join me in voting against the bill. I do so for the simple reason that the bill as presently before us does not solve the problems of the nuclear waste program. In fact, it magnifies those problems.

Let me go through some of the specifics.

First, the bill does not reduce the liability that is borne by taxpayers for the program's failure. Instead of reducing that liability, this bill would increase that liability. The part of the bill that purports to offer the Department of Energy authority to settle lawsuits filed against it is arguably worse for the U.S. taxpayer than is current law. Other parts of the bill set new and arbitrary deadlines for the Department of Energy to ship nuclear waste